

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Objections To The Specification

Rejections of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) As Anticipated By Goele (U.S. Patent No. 3,848,271)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10-11, 13, 16-18, 20-21, 23, and 27 as being anticipated by Goele. Claim 1 has been amended and is believed to be patentably distinguished from Goele in that Claim 1 now recites that the extended post extends through an opening in the desired article (the opening having an enclosed perimeter). Additionally, for the first end of the extended post, this end is operatively connected to the shoulder and this end has a traverse extent to the length of the post when this traverse extent is at least as large as any other post extent that is perpendicular the length of the post. No such limitation is believed provided in Goele. Additionally, Claim 1 now recites that the shoulder and the post have at least (a) and (b) following attached to each other *prior* to the (attachment) device being affixed to the desired article:

- (a) the shoulder, and
- (b) the first end of the post.

Additionally Claim 1 recites that the shoulder and this traverse extent *remain attached to each other throughout an affixing of said device to the desired article*. Thus, it is believed that the Examiner's 102(b) rejection of Claim 1 is overcome. Additionally, all Goele rejections of claims dependent from Claim 1 are also believed to be overcome due at least to their dependence on Claim 1. In particular, since Claims 6, 16, 17, 18, and 20 were rejected on no other reference than Goele, it is believed that Claims 6, 16, 17, 18, and 20 are now patentable.

Additionally regarding the Examiner's rejection of Claim 8 by Goele, the Examiner states "Goele discloses the post and shoulder are integral with each other." The Examiner has further identified the shoulder as Goele's washer 27, and the post as the combination of Goele's stud 13 and bolt 25.

A primary aspect of one embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention is to be able to repeatedly affix and deattach it from a desired article without assembly or disassembly. It is believed clear from the various embodiments of present invention shown in at least in Figs. 1-7 and 10 that the post 24 and the shoulder 22 are “integral” in the sense that these two components remain operably connected to one another substantially independently of the present invention’s functional context, and in particular, whether the attachment device of the present invention is: (a) in the process of being attached to a desired article, (b) attached to the desired article, and/or (c) deattached from the desired article. Moreover, the specification of the present application also indicates such in that it states that the post and shoulder are manufactured integral, e.g.,

“In a preferred embodiment, *the post and the shoulder are fixedly attached to each other*, and indeed, in a most preferred embodiment, they are *made integral* with one another. Other embodiments, however include a threaded connection between the post and shoulder (Fig. 9), a ball and socket connection (Fig. 8), a snap-lock connection (not shown) etc. Again, while the present invention can be comprised of plastic or metal, in a preferred embodiment, the present invention is made from a metal material, such as brass, steel, nickel etc. or other metal alloys.” (Page 6, lines 13-19).

Accordingly, Claim 8 has been amended to recite that an entirety of the post, and the shoulder are *continuously fixedly attached* to each other: (a) *prior to being affixed to said desired article*, (b) *throughout an affixing of said device to said desired article*, and (c) *independently of whether said device is affixed to said desired article or not*. Inspection of Goele’s figures clearly indicate that the Examiner’s identification of the post and shoulder do not satisfy Claim 8 as presently amended in that Goele’s washer 27 and Goele’s bolt 25 are separate components, and additionally, Goele’s stud 13 is not and *can not* be attached to Goele’s washer 27 *throughout* an affixing of Goele’s device to the belt 11. For example, the following passage from Goele indicates that prior to and during at least the initial portion of attachment to the belt 11, Goele’s washer 27, stud 13 and bolt 25 are not fixedly attached to one another:

“in FIG. 2, each of the studs 13 has a central internal thread and is attached by means of a bolt 2 and washer 27 with bolt 25 being inserted from behind the belt and screwed into the stud 13.” (Goele, col. 2, lines 58-61).

Accordingly, it is believed that the Examiner’s rejection of Claim 8 is overcome.

Regarding Claim 10, this claim includes a new limitation similar to one of the new limitations of Claim 1 identified immediately above; i.e., this new limitation being:

“wherein at least (1) and (2) following are attached to each other *prior to and throughout* said device being affixed to the desired article: (1) *at least an entirety of said post from said first end and extending at least to approximately said aperture*, and (2) said shoulder;”

Accordingly, it is believed that at least this limitation distinguishes Claim 10 from Goele so that the Examiner’s Goele 102(b) rejection is overcome.

Regarding dependent Claims 11, 21, and 27, these claims depend from Claim 10. Moreover, Claims 11 and 27 were only rejected on the Goele reference. Accordingly, it is believed that Claims 11 and 27 are now patentable at least due to their dependence upon Claim 10.

Rejections of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) As Anticipated By Dietz (U.S. Patent No. 867,255)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 10, 12, 13, 15, and 22 as being anticipated by Dietz.

Regarding Claim 10, the Examiner interprets: (a) the extended post as Dietz’s ring base 6 (which includes 6a and 6b), and (b) the shoulder as Dietz’s stationary body portion 1. Moreover, the Examiner states that the body portion 1 includes first and second shoulder surfaces as Dietz’s components 4a and 1a. However, this is incorrect in that: (1) the component 4a is not part of Dietz’s body portion 1, and (2) the component 4a is not a surface. In particular, the component 4a is part of the spring 4, and more particularly, the two components 4a are “a pair of upwardly inclined *points*” (Dietz, col. 1, lines 37-38). Additionally, the Examiner interprets the contact portion of Claim 10 as a “portion of sides 3, 1b, and 4a”. However, none of these items are

sides. In particular, 3 is a *spring*, 1b is the *entire* back portion of Dietz's stationary body portion 1, and 4a is an *inclined point*. Moreover, the Examiner appears to interpret the desired article of Claim 10 as the garment to which Dietz's key holder is to be attached since the Examiner refers to the garment as such in rejecting Claims 13 and 15.

In any interpretation of the Examiner's reasoning for rejecting Claim 10, it is believed that the presently amended version of this claim overcomes such reasoning. In particular, Claim 10 now recites the following additional limitations:

1. For all embodiments of the post and shoulder: "said post and shoulder are fixedly attached to each other *prior to and throughout* said device being affixed to the desired article";
2. For limitation (a) of Claim 10, the claim now recites the further limitation that "said extended post does not include an extent that is expanded in a direction traverse to said length wherein such an expanded extent substantially prevents movement of said desired article along said length between said shoulder and said aperture when affixing said device to said desired article;" and
3. For limitation (b) of Claim 10, wherein the contact portion includes opposing interior sides of the shoulder, the claim now recites the further limitation that "said interior sides are *between* said first and second surfaces and substantially define an enclosure for contacting a front and back of a button of said desired article so that the device is supported on the desired article by the button".

Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 10 is now in condition for allowance since both of the Examiner's rejections for this claim have been overcome. Moreover, due to the patentability of Claim 10, all claims dependent upon Claim 10 are now patentable.

Regarding Claim 12, in addition to the reasoning for rejecting Claim 10, the Examiner further interprets Dietz's front part (1b) of the body portion 1, as the "second surface", and states that the desired article is provided between the front part 1b and the inclined point 4a (which the Examiner interprets as a "first surface"), wherein presumably the garment is the desired article. It is unclear how the Examiner can arrive at such an interpretation since:

1. Dietz's front part 1b does ***NOT*** contact the garment, spring 3 is interspersed therebetween; and
2. Dietz's front part 1b is NOT a surface, it is the entire front portion of the body portion 1.

Additionally, the Examiner asserts that in Dietz the "removal of the post from the shoulder "damages" the device because if the post is removed, the device will no longer perform its intended function." This is incorrect. Dietz's key holder is designed so that its intended function is to have its components easily detach and reattach as desired. Accordingly, no "damage" is done to Dietz's key holder by detaching the Examiner's identification of the post from the Examiner's identification of the shoulder. In particular, it is respectfully submitted that the Claim 12 phrase "removal of said post from said shoulder ***damages*** said device" is not disclosed or suggested in Dietz for the following reasons:

1. Although there are numerous definitions for the word "damage", in the present context the most appropriate definitions refer to the injury or harm to a person or object. It is respectfully submitted neither injury or harm is done to Dietz's key holder when the ring base 6 is detached from the body portion 1. In fact, Dietz discloses how to remove the ring base 6 from the body portion 1 as part of the ***normal*** operation of Dietz's key holder, e.g., it is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider the following Dietz passages:

(a) "Fig. 4 is a detail view showing ***the ring with its base constituting the detachable part.***" (Dietz, col. 1, lines 20-21); and

(b) "When the spring has been so forced back the ring with its base 6 ***may readily be removed*** by passing it up the slot until it comes opposite the enlarged upper end.. By providing the bend or indentation 3a in the spring 3 the ring base 6 ***may be passed freely in and out of the slot 2*** at the upper end without requiring any force or pressure." (Dietz, col. 2, lines 80-86)

Thus, no harm or injury is done to Dietz's key holder by removing the ring base from the body portion 1.

2. The *intended* function of Dietz's key holder *is* to be able to attach and detach the ring base 6 from the body portion 1 as the Dietz passages immediately above substantiate. Accordingly, there is no damage done to Dietz's key holder since it is easily reattached and designed to be reattached.
3. The Examiner's reasoning and interpretation of the word "damage" would equally apply to asserting a car is "damaged" when the car's transmission is in "park" rather than "drive" since one of the car's intended functions is transportation, and most cars will not move while in "park". Applicant's representative knows of no reasonable context where one would assert that a car is "damaged" merely because the transmission is in "park" since an additional one of the intended (and easily reversible) configurations of the car is to have its transmission in "park".

Regarding Claims 13 and 15, these claims are believed patentable due to their dependence upon patentable Claim 10.

Regarding Claim 22, this claim is believed patentable both due to its dependence upon patentable Claim 10 and due to the novel limitations provided in Claim 22.

Rejections of Claims 1, 4, 8-9, 23, and 24 Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) As Anticipated By Nielson (U.S. Patent No. 6,026,515)

Claims 1, 4, 8-9, 23, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nielson. The Examiner states that Nielson's device has, among other things, the following components:

- (a) a 'shoulder' which the Examiner identifies as Nielson's fly enclosure fastener 10 and which Nielson describes as "having an eyelet portion 20, two elongated members 50 and 51, a belt loop fastener 30, and an ornamental body in the form of medallion 40" (Nielson, col. 3, lines 35-37); and
- (b) a 'first portion' which the Examiner identifies as a "portion of 10 that supports the device on the button, between the right most portion of 10 shown in figure 1, and the post 20".

Additionally, the Examiner states that this ‘first portion’ connects between at least a portion of the shoulder and the ‘outwardly extending portion (20), for providing support to the device on the desired article’. Accordingly, since the Examiner is identifying Nielson’s *entire* device as the ‘shoulder’ for rejecting Claims 1, 4, and 8-9, and Claim 1 recites a second component, namely, an ‘extended post’ that is *operatively connected* to the shoulder, it is believed that Claim 1 overcomes the Examiner’s rejection, and thus, Claims 1, 4, and 8-9, 23, and 24 are allowable.

Rejections of Claims 2, 8, 25 and 26 Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) Over Goele In View Of Nielson (U.S. Patent No. 6,026,515)

The Examiner’s rejections of Claims 2, 8, 25 and 26 as obvious over Goele in view of Nielson are traversed. Moreover, Applicant’s representative herein incorporates discussions in previous Amendment and Responses (e.g., the Amendment and Response of Office Action dated May 7, 2002) directed to the legal limitations on issuing an obviousness rejection.

The Examiner admits that Goele does not disclose a washer as recited in Claims 2, 25, and 26. However, the Examiner asserts that Monk recites a washer that can fit over a post for securing a device to a desired article, and presumably, that Goele and Monk are sufficiently related that they can be combined to provide an obviousness rejection. Applicant’s representative respectfully disagrees for the following reasons.

1. In Monk, the spacers 50 do not function in a manner analogous to a washer in Applicant’s present invention. That is, the Monk’s spacers 50 are *interior* to any designated ‘desired article’ (e.g., Monk’s wrapper 32), and accordingly can not provide any function that is related to being *external* to the ‘desired article’ as recited in Claims 2, 25 and 26.
2. For an obviousness rejection, the references must provide some motivation for combining, and the Examiner must cite such motivation. The Examiner states that ‘it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Goele as taught by Monk in order to provide more space between the aperture and the shoulder.’ However, there is no suggestion in either Goele or Monk of providing a washer that is external to a ‘desired article’. Moreover, there

would be no motivation for providing a washer on one of Goele's studs 13 (i.e., the exterior of the belt 11 to which Goele's device is attached), since any such washer *fitted over* one of Goele's studs 13 *would in no way function as the Examiner suggests* for providing more space between the presumed shoulder (i.e., washer 27), and the presumed aperture (i.e., the attachment for a ring 19).

Additionally, these claims now recite that the washer is "is slidable between said desired article and said second end", and it is believed that this additional limitation overcomes the Examiner's rejection. Accordingly, Claims 2, 25, and 26 are additionally patentable for the reasoning presented here.

New Claims

Applicant's representative requests entry of new claims 29 through 71. New Claims 29 through 35 plus 68 and 69 are dependent upon patentable Claim 1, and accordingly are believed patentable at least due to their dependence upon Claim 1. New Claims 36 through 44 are dependent upon patentable Claim 10, and accordingly are believed patentable at least due to their dependence upon Claim 10.

New Claim 45 is an independent method claim that includes, e.g., a step of removing the (attachment) device from the desired article by removing an item attached to the (attachment) device via the post aperture. It is believed that no prior art of reference shows this limitation. Thus, Claim 45 is believed patentable. Note that new Claims 46 through 56 are dependent upon Claim 45, and accordingly, are at least patentable due to their dependence upon patentable Claim 45.

New Claim 57 is an independent claim that recites the combination of the desired article and the attachment device, which is believed patentable due to the limitations discussed hereinabove. Claims 58 through 67 are dependent upon Claim 57 and accordingly are believed to be patentable at least due to their dependence on Claim 57.

New Claim 70 is an independent claim that is similar to Claim 1; however, Claim 70 recites that "there is no component between said shoulder and said aperture for providing a

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clamping pressure for securing said device, in a fixed position, to the desired article”.

Accordingly, it is believed that this claim is patentable.

New Claim 71 is an independent claim that is similar to Claim 1; however, Claim 70 recites that in addition to the shoulder and the post being attached to one another prior to the device being affixed to the desired article, the portion of the post attached to the shoulder includes:

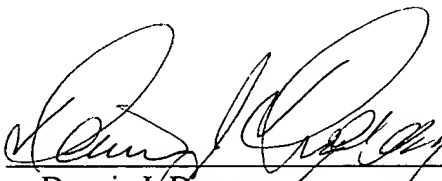
“at least one traverse extent of said post that is substantially perpendicular to said length such that said traverse extent is at least as large as any other post extent that is perpendicular to said length”.

Accordingly, it is believed that this claim is patentable.

Since all claims are now believed to be in condition for allowance, it is requested that the present application be reconsidered and promptly be allowed to proceed to issuance. Applicant’s representative believes that no additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, other than the fee of \$498.00 for the addition of 41 new claims, including 3 new independent claims present herein. However, in the event that fees are due, please debit Deposit Account No. 19-1970.

Respectfully submitted,

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ATTACHMENT DEVICE FOR KEYS AND OTHER ITEMS ~~KEY RING HOLDER~~

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to an attachment device ~~a key ring holder~~, and more particularly to a device attachable to a belt or garment which facilitates connecting of various devices, including a key chain.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Various attachment devices such as key holders and retainers are known in the art, including those described in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,072,033 to Eckerdt; 3,979,934 to Isenmann; 3,906,763 to Bochory; 3,771,341 to Laufer; and 4,004,325 to Hubachek. None of such prior art devices, however, provide a device capable of providing ~~permanent~~ attachment to a desired article (e.g., garment or a belt, or a variety of other items), and that is further constructed of materials, and additionally is of such a design that it facilitates: (1) easy access and secure attachment of, e.g., a key ring or a key chain, and (2) is easily attached and detached from the desired article. There is therefore a long felt but unsolved need for an inexpensive, easy to manufacture attachment device capable of being secured to any number of desired articles ~~items~~, but in particular a garment or a belt, to facilitate the easy, reversible attachment and detachment of a key ring, a key chain or any number of similar items.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a unique, simple and secure attachment device for use as, e.g., a key ring holder (e.g., apparatus 20 of Fig. 1) capable of being installed on a variety of items (denoted "desired articles" herein), including but not limited to clothing, belts, handbags, backpacks and luggage (e.g., a desired article 12 for attachment as in Fig. 1). Additionally, the present invention is directed to the attachment device in combination with a desired article to which the attachment device is attachable and detachable.

In a preferred embodiment, the attachment device (e.g., a key ring holder) of the present invention is constructed from a solid and durable material, such as metal or hardened

plastic. A preferred design of the attachment device of the present invention includes an extended post (e.g., post 24 of Fig. 1) connected to a shoulder (e.g., shoulder 22 of Fig. 1), wherein the post includes: (i) a first portion (e.g., post portion 25, Fig. 1) for supportively contacting the attachment device apparatus of the invention on the desired article 12, and (ii)
5 an outwardly extending portion (e.g., post portion 27, Fig. 1) having at least one aperture (e.g., aperture 26 of Fig. 1) running therethrough for attaching various other hardware, including clips, snap hooks, quick links, shackles, rings etc (e.g., key chain 13, Fig. 11). The shoulder, in at least some embodiments, includes a first surface (e.g., surface 29 shown in Figs. 1 through 10) and an opposite second surface (e.g., surface 33 shown in Figs. 1 and 2).
10 The shoulder is preferably securely mounted to an article (e.g., desired article 12 of Fig. 1 or Fig. 3) ~~to which~~ when such attachment is desired). In one embodiment, the shoulder is securely fastened to an article which may be a garment, such as jeans, pants, or overalls, thus facilitating easy access to the attachment device of the present invention for a person wearing such a garment. In other embodiments, the attachment device of the present invention can be
15 reversibly attached to desired article (e.g., a garment), such as through a button hole (e.g., button hole 14 of Fig. 3) or other suitable aperture, thus allowing a user to use the attachment device of the present invention with a variety of articles 12 rather than having it securely attached to just one article. The aperture running through the post is preferably of a size to provide for attachment of a variety of connecting apparatuses including but not limited to
20 rings, snap hooks, shackles, etc.

In other embodiments, more than one aperture is provided in the post (e.g., apertures 26 of Fig. 6) to facilitate more than one attaching device passing through said post. Thus, a variety of different key ring attachment means can be reversibly connected by using more than one of such apertures.

25 In still further embodiments, the post itself has a design to facilitate the reversible secure engagement of a connecting member or item. For example, the post can have an aperture running transversely therethrough which is large enough to extend completely through one wall of the post creating an open side of the post which is closed off by a reversibly and pivotally connected lever member. The preferably spring loaded lever is

maintained in a closed position during normal use such that any connecting article must force the pivoting member to move so that the interior of the post aperture can be accessed. The pivoting member can then move back to its normal, closed position, thus securing the connecting article inside the now closed aperture of the post.

5 Particular embodiments of the present invention are directed to garments having at least one attachment device ~~of the (e.g., a key ring holders)~~ of the present invention affixed thereto (e.g., overalls 32 of Fig. 11 having apparatus 20 attached thereto). Still other embodiments are directed to belts, preferably made of either plastic, leather or other suitable durable material having at least one ~~of the key ring holders~~ attachment device of the present
10 invention attached thereto.

Securement of the attachment device ~~apparatus~~ of the present invention to a garment or belt can be achieved in various different ways as will be appreciated by one of skill in the art. Preferably, however, the shoulder (e.g., shoulder 22 of Fig. 1) of the present invention can be attached directly to the garment or belt by a suitable adhesive and/or apertures can be
15 provided in the shoulder for securing the shoulder to a garment or belt with rivets, thread, etc.

A still further embodiment involves a rivet connection made possible by the shoulder being of a sufficient diameter such that it will not pass through an aperture in a grommet (e.g., grommet 18 Fig. 1) but which permits the post of the present invention to pass therethrough.

To secure the post in such a grommet hole, various means can be employed. For example,
20 the post may be maintained in a desired extended position, facilitating access to the at least one aperture in said post, simply due to the contact with, e.g., a person's body or undergarment pressing outward against the shoulder. Accordingly, the post is loosely slidable along the length of the post between the shoulder and the (nearest) aperture when there is no force against the shoulder for causing contact with the portion of the desired
25 article immediately surrounding the desired article aperture through which the attachment device is attached to the desired article. Thus, when such force is applied, the first shoulder surface (e.g., surface 29 of Fig. 1) contacts a desired article to which the attachment device
~~invention~~ is attached. Accordingly, an embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention may include a "contact portion" for contacting a desired article and securing the

embodiment of the attachment device thereto, wherein, the contact portion includes, e.g., the exterior surface of the shoulder (e.g., surface 29 of Fig. 1), and the first portion (e.g., post portion 25, Fig. 1) described hereinabove. Since the post is loosely slidable within the desired article aperture between the shoulder and the connecting member or item within the aperture, the contact portion of the post for supporting the attachment device on the desired article also can vary along the length of the post between the shoulder and substantially the (nearest) aperture. Accordingly, even the largest extent of the post that is traverse (e.g., perpendicular) to the post's length fits through the desired article aperture. In the embodiments shown in Figs. 1-9, an extent of the end of the post that is attached to the shoulder is at least as large as any other extent of the post that is perpendicular to the length of the post.

Alternatively, the attachment device can be more firmly attached inside a grommet hole through the use of an exterior washer (e.g., washer 28, Figs. 10 and 11) that fits over the post once the post has extended through the grommet hole. Thus, the shoulder is of sufficient circumference and diameter so that it cannot pass through a grommet hole, but wherein the post may extend through the hole, whereby a washer is placed over the post to secure it in place. One will appreciate that the washer placed over the post may be of different configurations, colors, etc. and is primarily intended as a cosmetic component. The washer may not require a fixation to the post and/or fabric adjacent thereto and can simply be maintained in its position on the post due to the fact that an attaching ring or article through the post aperture will prevent the washer from falling off. The washer can, however, also be affixed to the grommet structure and/or the belt, fabric, etc. of the desired article to which the grommet is attached. Various adhesives, riveting structures, threaded connections, etc., are also possible in order to achieve securement of the attachment device of the present invention to a desired article.

In use, a person threads a connecting device, such as a snap hook or a circular, overlapping wire ring, through the at least one aperture provided in the post. Once attached, the connecting device will simply hang from the post, thus facilitating the carrying of key chains, key rings, and various other desired hardware.

The size, diameter and circumference of the aperture provided in the post can obviously vary depending upon the particular use intended. Preferably, the aperture is at least about 1 centimeter in diameter, more preferably at least about 1/8th of an inch, and most preferably over about 1/4 of an inch. The size of the aperture can be varied to accommodate the attachment of various hardware, such as the girth of snap hooks or rings that may be used in conjunction with the attachment device of the present invention.

The length of the post can similarly be varied depending upon the particular uses to which the attachment device of the present invention is directed. The preferred length of the post is at least about 1 cm, more preferably at least about 1/4 inch and most preferably at least about 1/2 inch. The length should not, however exceed about one inch unless more than one aperture is provided therethrough. For example, if more than one aperture is provided in the post, the post can be of a longer length than if merely one aperture were afforded therein. Indeed, in one embodiment, several apertures are provided in a post to facilitate the attachment of more than one connecting means. Thus, different numbers and sizes of apertures may also be provided in a post to facilitate particular uses.

The aperture through the post is preferably perpendicular to the length of the post, but can, in various embodiments, be in any angular orientation through the transverse section of the post. In a preferred embodiment, the aperture is a double counter sunk hole (see Figure 1) so as to facilitate the easy attachment and detachment of a connecting means. Moreover, the shape of the aperture hole can be of any desired geometry, but is preferably round. Thus, octangular, triangular, square and other shaped holes are within the scope of the present invention.

The extent of the shoulder diameter (in a circular shoulder embodiment) can be of any size sufficient to anchor the present invention in an article to which it is attached. Preferably, the diameter of the shoulder is slightly less than the length of the post. As one of skill will appreciate, the particular geometrical configuration of the shoulder can vary, but in a preferred embodiment, it is circular in shape. Other geometries that are preferred lack sharp edges which could negatively affect articles to which the present invention is attached given that the weight of any connecting means on the post will create pivotal torsion on the edges

of the shoulder against the garment, belt, or other article to which the attachment device of the present invention is attached, thus causing undesired abrasion.

In some embodiments, reinforcement of a garment or other desired article to which the attachment device of the present invention is attached may be necessary in order to insure proper and long term attachment of the shoulder to the garment, belt or other article. For example, with respect to a garment, a suitable additional patch material may be provided that provides additional tensile strength to the garment fabric surrounding and attaching to the shoulder region of the attachment device of the present invention.

Still a further embodiment of the present invention is directed to an embodiment where the shoulder has a transverse aperture provided therein to facilitate slipping the shoulder (22) over an existing button (30) of a garment (12), such as a metal button common on denim jeans. For example, transverse aperture 34 of Fig. 4 is representative, wherein this aperture has a first interior side 35 for contacting the hidden side of the button 30, and an opposing second interior side, interior to the shoulder, for contacting the button side 31. Accordingly by slipping the present device (20) over an existing button 30, easy attachment of the present attachment device to a desired article is made possible without the need to provide a separate hole in the desired article (e.g., jeans or other articles), and without the need to provide adhesives, separate rivets, etc. Thus, an embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention may include a "contact portion" for contacting, e.g., a button, of a desired article and securing the embodiment thereto, wherein, the contact portion includes the first and second interior surfaces of the shoulder described hereinabove.

In a preferred embodiment, the post and the shoulder are fixedly attached to each other, and indeed, in a most preferred embodiment, they are made integral with one another. Other embodiments, however include a threaded connection between the post and shoulder (Fig. 9), a ball and socket connection (Fig. 8), a snap-lock connection (not shown) etc. Again, while the attachment device of the present invention can be comprised of plastic or metal, in a preferred embodiment, the attachment device of the present invention is made from a metal material, such as brass, steel, nickel etc. or other metal alloys. Accordingly, in at least some embodiments, both the shoulder 22 and the post 24 are rigid. As illustrated in

the accompanying Figs. 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8, the shoulder 22 and post 24 are fixedly attached to one another separately from any attachment to a desired article such as a garment, jeans, pants, overalls, belt, purse, handbag, backpack, luggage etc. Since, in at least some embodiments of the attachment device, the shoulder and post are integral with one another, 5 the shoulder 22 and the post 24 can not be separated from one another without damaging the attachment device so that it can no longer, without unintended repair effort not described herein, be used to perform at least one function for which the attachment device is designed and described herein. At least for the embodiments of the attachment device that have a shoulder and post that are integral, the shoulder and post are also fixedly attached to each 10 other throughout the process of affixing the attachment device of the present invention to the desired article.

As shown in each of the embodiments of Figs. 1-3 and 5-10, to assure that such embodiments can be reversibly attached (i.e., attached and detached) to one or more desired articles, the post 24 does not include an extent that is expanded in a direction traverse to its 15 length such that such an expanded extent would prevent moving the post along its length between its connection to the shoulder and the opposite end of the post that is not attached to the shoulder.

Although in a preferred embodiment the post is connected to the shoulder at a 90° angle, other angular orientations are well within the scope of the present invention. Indeed, 20 Fig. 7, shows one embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention where the post is angled downwardly to limit the degree of extension of the post away from a belt or garment to which it is attached.

Other features and embodiments will be revealed to those of skill in the art from a review of the detailed description of preferred embodiments and the figures described and 25 featured herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Fig. 1 is a side view of the present invention (e.g., apparatus 20 and/or the desired article 12) showing one view of the aperture (26) running through the post (24), wherein the

post (24) has a uniform cross section along its length between the shoulder (22) and at least the aperture (26);

Fig. 2 is a side view of the attachment device of the present invention turned 90° from that shown in Fig. 1;

5 Fig. 3 is a top view of the present invention showing the smaller diameter of the post (24) as compared to the larger diameter of the surrounding shoulder (22);

Fig. 4 is an alternative embodiment of the present invention wherein the shoulder (22) facilitates slipping over a button (30) existing on a garment (12);

10 Fig. 5 illustrates another embodiment to the attachment device of the present invention where the shoulder (22) and aperture (26) through the post (24) are of a distinct geometrical configuration, and in particular, the post (24) has a uniform cross section along its length between the shoulder (22) and the post's end that is opposite the post end attached to the shoulder, more particularly, the post (24) has a polygonal cross section;

15 Fig. 6 illustrates another embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention having more than one aperture (26) through the post (24);

Fig. 7 illustrates one embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention where the post (24) is angularly connected to the shoulder (22), wherein the post (24) has a uniform cross section along its length between the shoulder (22) and at least the aperture (26), and in particular, the post 24 is substantially a cylinder;

20 Fig. 8 shows a ball and socket connection between the shoulder (22) and the post (24);

Fig. 9 shows a threaded connection between the post (24) and the shoulder (22);

Fig. 10 shows one embodiment of the present invention wherein a washer (28) is fit over the post (24) for securement purposes; and

25 Fig. 11 shows the present invention as it is used on jeans with a key ring/chain (13).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to Figs. 1-11, the present ~~key ring holder~~ invention, wherein attachment device 20 comprises a shoulder 22 connected to a post 24, such post having at least aperture

26 running transversely therethrough. In a preferred embodiment, the aperture 26 is a double counter sunk hole as shown in Fig. 1. The diameter of the shoulder 22 is preferably less than the length of the post 24 but can be of any particular size in order to facilitate secure attachment of the key ring holder to a desired article, such as a garment, belt, purse, etc.

5 Fig. 6, shows one embodiment of the attachment device of the present invention having more than one aperture 26 provided through the post 24. Fig. 7 shows the aperture 26 being provided at a slanted angle through the post 24.

 Fig. 9, shows one embodiment where the post 24 is threadedly engageable with the shoulder 22, thus facilitating removal of the post 24 from the shoulder 22.

10 Fig. 10, shows one embodiment wherein the post 24 has a washer 28 which fits over the post.

 Fig. 11, shows the present invention (e.g., including the embodiment of Fig. 10)-as it may be used on jeans with a key ring/chain 13. The post 24 is fed through a hole in a garment, belt, etc.

15 While various embodiments of the present invention have been described in detail, it is apparent that further modifications and adaptations of the invention will occur to those skilled in the art. However, it is to be expressly understood that such modifications and adaptations are within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

ABSTRACT

An attachment device for attaching, e.g., a key ring holder is disclosed wherein the device facilitates the reversible attachment of various connecting means, such a device holder having a shoulder connected to a post and such post having at least one aperture running
5 therethrough for attachment of snap hooks, rings etc. Attachment to various desired articles, preferably belts, garments, etc. is accomplished by, e.g., securing the shoulder by adhesive means or through a riveting structure, thereby allowing a post having an aperture
therethrough to extend outwardly for easy access by a user. In some embodiments, the key
ring holder can be loosely attached to a desired article, wherein an attachment of an item via
10 the aperture is sufficient to secure the